

CITY COUNCIL
COMMUNITY PLANNING AND TRANSPORTATION
COMMITTEE MINUTES

August 26, 2021

The City Council Community Planning and Transportation Committee of the City of Norman, Cleveland County, State of Oklahoma, met at 4:02 p.m. in the Executive Conference Room on the 26th day of August, 2021, and notice and agenda of the meeting were posted in the Municipal Building at 201 West Gray 48 hours prior to the beginning of the meeting.

PRESENT: Councilmembers Hall, Schueler, Studley, and
Chairman Holman

ABSENT: Councilmember Peacock

OTHERS PRESENT: Mayor Breea Clark
Mr. Paul D’Andrea, Capital Projects Engineer
Ms. Carrie Evenson, Stormwater Program Manager
Mr. Joseph Hill, Streets Program Manager
Ms. Jane Hudson, Director of Planning and
Community Development
Mr. Taylor Johnson, Public Transit Coordinator
Mr. Tim Miles, Capital Projects Engineer
Mr. Shawn O’Leary, Director of Public Works
Ms. Heather Poole, Assistant City Attorney
Mr. Darrel Pyle, City Manager
Mr. David Riesland, Transportation Engineer
Ms. Jeanne Snider, Assistant City Attorney
Mr. Scott Sturtz, City Engineer
Mr. Chris Tatham, Chief Executive Officer for ETC
Institute
Ms. Kathryn Walker, City Attorney
Ms. Syndi Runyon, Administrative Technician IV

Item 1, being:

DISCUSSION REGARDING POTENTIAL STORMWATER PROJECTS TO BE FUNDED BY
AMERICAN RESCUE PLAN ACT (ARPA) FUNDS.

Ms. Carrie Evenson, Stormwater Program Manager, said Stormwater Capital Improvement Projects (CIP) generally consist of improvements to the stormwater conveyance system through infrastructure repairs (replacing culverts, pipes, channel liners), stream stabilization (repairing damage to streambanks caused by stormwater flows), and property acquisition/buyouts (acquiring properties within the floodway or floodplain).

Item 1, continued:

Ms. Evenson said projects are determined through the Stormwater Master Plan (SWMP) and in October 2009, Post, Buckley, Schuh, and Jernigan (PBS&J) Company completed a study that was a culmination of years of effort and numerous meetings and included a comprehensive study of Norman's watersheds as well as a list of projects. She said approximately 50 projects were identified and the City has been able to complete a few of the projects, but funding is always a challenge. She said projects generally are done when included in a transportation project and the Lindsey Street Project is a great example of combining transportation improvements with stormwater improvements. She said Lindsey Street was one of the highest ranked projects in the SWMP. She said projects can be placed on the list through citizen, organization, or Council requests based on complaints from residents experiencing flooding of their property. She said there are also special studies as a result of public or Staff identified problem areas, such as the lower Imhoff Creek Study. She said Staff identifies problems through routine maintenance/inspections or in response to flooding events.

There is a method detailed in the SWMP that helps determine project prioritization that includes factors such as public safety, sustainability, funding advantages, positive impacts on neighborhoods and the environment, relationship to other infrastructure issues, and costs versus benefits. Ms. Evenson said factors are weighted based on importance and each factor is then rated from most relevant to no relevance to obtain a factor score and each project's score is ranked accordingly. There are approximately 60 projects on the list with 58 of them being identified as SWMP projects and new projects are ranked and added as necessary. The City has completed six projects to date and the total estimated cost of all remaining projects is \$106 million.

In 2019, a Stormwater Citizen Committee met for two years to discuss a Stormwater Utility (SWU) and they recommended a SWU rate and Stormwater General Obligation (G.O.) Bond. Ms. Evenson said the proposed G.O. Bond was \$60 million, which would be a \$5.25 per month property tax increase based on property's market value of \$150,000. At that time, 33 projects were selected within the eight wards that included streambank stabilization, infrastructure replacement, capacity improvements, and detention pond expansion. The proposition for the G.O. Bond and SWU went to a vote of the people and failed. The 33 projects selected included various locations along Bishop Creek; Canadian River; Merkle Creek; Brookhaven Creek; Ten Mile Flat Creek; Imhoff Creek; Dave Blue Creek; Little River; Woodcrest Creek; and Rock Creek.

Ms. Evenson said a potential project using ARPA funds is improvements to Lower Imhoff Creek that has significant bank erosion for an overall cost of \$7,500,000. She said the project would be phased to make it easier to fund and Phase I will be south of Imhoff Road Bridge for an estimated cost of \$3,500,000. This project is currently under design (funds encumbered) and is the highest ranking SWMP project that is "shovel ready." Phase II will be north of Imhoff Road Bridge at an estimated cost of \$4,500,000 to be completed at a later date. She said a property owner is losing his backyard to Imhoff Creek and his sewer infrastructure will be put into jeopardy if this project is not completed.

Ms. Evenson said Staff will continue to seek grant funds from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), but that is never a guarantee and she would be remiss if she stated otherwise.

Item 1, continued:

Mr. Shawn O’Leary, Director of Public Works, said natural materials (reverse gabion, typical gabion, rock toe, etc.) will be used for the projects, which is part of the criteria for the use of ARPA funds so no concrete retaining walls will be constructed.

Another potential project for ARPA funds is Norman Nature Park, which is located at South Carter Avenue and Alameda Street at an estimated cost of \$1,500,000. The goal is to provide additional floodplain storage capacity (retention basin), serve as an outdoor classroom with access to Bishop Creek, and provide a location for green infrastructure installation and demonstration projects.

Another potential project for ARPA funds is Imhoff Bridge repairs, which was given the highest priority for maintenance in the FYE 2022 Bridge Maintenance Program. On July 29, 2021, stormwater maintenance Staff notified the City of failure of the southeast wing wall with enough significant damage to require closure of Imhoff Road at the bridge. On August 11, 2021, the contractor identified spalling on the northwest wing wall that had dangerously separated from the bridge structure. The bridge needs emergency repairs at an estimated cost of \$1 million or be replaced at a cost of \$4 to \$5 million.

Mr. O’Leary said Staff would like to have the Imhoff Bridge repair item on Council’s agenda of November 9th in order to proceed with the project as soon as possible.

Councilmembers liked all the project proposals and supported Staff’s proposal for Imhoff Bridge repairs, but wanted to see other options for funding these projects other than ARPA funds. The Committee suggested moving the proposals forward to full Council prior to November 9th.

Items submitted for the record

1. PowerPoint presentation entitled, “Stormwater Capital Projects and ARPA Funding,” dated August 26, 2021

Item 2, being:

PRESENTATION FROM CHRIS TATHAM, CEO, ETC INSTITUTE, OF THE EMBARK NORMAN 2020 CUSTOMER AND MARKET STUDY.

Mr. O’Leary said as part of the Transit Master Plan, a customer satisfaction survey was performed regarding the EMBARK Transit System. He introduced Mr. Jessie Rush, Operation Manager for EMBARK, and Mr. Chris Tatham, Chief Executive Officer of ETC Institute.

Mr. Tatham said ETC Institute is a national leader in market research for local government organization and gather and use survey data to enhance organizational performance for more than 35 years. He said clients include 25 of the 35 largest public transit systems in the United States with more than 2.2 million persons surveyed since 2006 for more than 1,000 communities in 29 States.

Item 2, continued:

Mr. Tatham said the purpose of the *non-rider survey* is to assess the perceived importance of transit in the community among those who do not use transit; measure awareness of transit and familiarity with services provided; and determine if non-riders would consider using transit and, if so, what service characteristics are most important to them.

Surveys were conducted during the winter of 2020 and were administered by email and mail to 1,275 residents in EMBARK's service area (973 in Oklahoma City and 302 in Norman). Overall results have a precision of at least +/-2.7% at the 95% level of confidence and Norman residents have a precision of at least +/- 5.9% at the 95% level of confidence.

Mr. Tatham said 80% of Norman citizens think EMBARK's public transit services are valuable to the community versus 77% in Oklahoma City (OKC). When asked if public transportation is important to a thriving community, 61% strongly agreed, 21% agreed, 12% were not sure, and 4% strongly disagreed. When asked if the person preferred to drive rather than use public transportation, 41% strongly agreed, 34% agreed, 17% were unsure, 5% disagreed, and 3% strongly disagreed. When asked if a person had too many places to go during the day to use public transportation, 23% strongly agreed, 33% agreed, 27% were unsure, 13% disagreed, and 4% strongly disagreed. When asked if public transportation takes too long compared to other mode of transportation, 13% strongly agreed, 38% agreed, 36% were unsure, 12% disagreed, and 1% strongly disagreed. When asked if transit service does not take the person to the place they need to go, 16% agreed, 23% strongly agreed, 52% were unsure, 7% disagreed, and 2% strongly disagreed. When asked if transit service is offered near their home, 16% strongly agreed, 17% agreed, 36% were unsure, 19% disagreed, and 13% strongly disagreed. When asked if information service about transit service is difficult to understand, 9% strongly agreed, 18% agreed, 49% were unsure, 18% disagreed, and 6% strongly disagreed. When asked if transit service is offered when needed, 11% strongly agreed, 13% agreed, 61% were unsure, 12% disagreed, and 2% strongly disagreed. When asked if they feel safe waiting at bus stops, 5% strongly agreed, 12% agreed, 49% were unsure, 25% disagreed, and 10% strongly disagreed. When asked if they feel safe on the bus, 4% strongly agreed, 9% agreed, 50% were unsure, 25% disagreed, and 12% strongly disagreed. When asked if buses are on time, 3% strongly agreed, 6% agreed, 75% were unsure, 11% strongly disagreed, and 6% disagreed. When asked if buses are comfortable, 3% strongly agreed, 6% agreed, 61% were unsure, 21% disagreed, and 10% strongly disagreed. When asked if riding the bus is too expensive, 1% strongly agreed, 5% agreed, 59% were unsure, 23% disagreed, and 12% strongly disagreed.

When asked the importance of serving low-income, disabled, or senior populations that have few transportation options, 82% replied very important, 12% replied somewhat important, and 6% replied not important. When asked the importance of supporting economic development and access to jobs, 68% replied very important, 24% replied somewhat important, and 8% replied not important. When asked the importance of providing fast, reliable service on City's main arterial streets, 63% replied very important, 29% replied somewhat important, and 8% replied not important. When asked the importance of helping to create an environmentally friendly sustainable City, not only dependent on car travel, 60% replied very important, 28% replied somewhat important, and 12% replied not important.

Item 2, continued:

When asked the importance of increasing flow of traffic and reducing congestion in the region, 57% replied very important, 32% replied somewhat important, and 11% replied not important. When asked the importance of making it easier to get to and from transit (better sidewalks, stops, parks and ride facilities, etc.), 57% replied very important, 35% replied somewhat important, and 9% replied not important. When asked the importance of expanding EMBARK's service area (routes to more places), 55% replied very important, 35% replied somewhat important, and 10% replied not important. When asked the importance of providing an alternative to congested roadways, 55% replied very important, 33% replied somewhat important, and 12% replied not important. When asked the importance of supporting and funding improved public transportation, 65% replied very important, 19% replied somewhat important, 10% were unsure, and 6% replied not important.

When asked about the likelihood of using public transportation if the time it takes to get to their destination by public transit was faster/more frequent, 24% replied very likely, 37% replied likely, 21% were unsure, 5% replied not likely, and 13% replied not likely at all. When asked the likelihood of using public transportation if transit stops are located closer to the place they work or frequent, 24% replied very likely, 34% replied likely, 23% were unsure, 6% replied not likely, and 13% replied not likely at all. When asked the likelihood of using public transportation if buses are scheduled to arrive at stops more frequently, 15% replied very likely, 32% replied likely, 32% were unsure, 8% replied not likely, and 16% replied not likely at all. When asked the likelihood of using public transportation if their employer provided incentives to use public transportation services, 20% replied very likely, 35% replied likely, 28% were unsure, 9% replied not likely, and 19% replied not likely at all. When asked the likelihood of using public transportation if a person better understood how it worked, 11% replied very likely, 34% replied likely, 23% were unsure, 6% replied not likely, and 13% replied not likely at all. When asked the likelihood of using public transportation if shelters were located at bus stops where they would board or alight, 16% replied very likely, 25% replied likely, 32% were unsure, 11% replied not likely, and 16% replied not likely at all. When asked the likelihood of using public transportation if there were better times transfers between services, 10% replied very likely, 29% replied likely, 36% were unsure, 10% replied not likely, and 15% replied not likely at all. When asked the likelihood of using public transportation if the cost of parking increases at the place they work or at place they visit frequently, 11% replied very likely, 27% replied likely, 35% were unsure, 10% replied not likely, and 17% replied not likely at all. When asked the likelihood of using public transportation if EMBARK provided faster service, 13% replied very likely, 24% replied likely, 39% were unsure, 10% replied not likely, and 13% replied not likely at all. When asked the likelihood of using public transportation if there were options other than the bus, 16% replied very likely, 21% replied likely, 37% were unsure, 11% replied not likely, and 15% replied not likely at all. When asked the likelihood of using public transportation if service were offered earlier or later on existing routes, 12% replied very likely, 23% replied likely, 41% were unsure, 10% replied not likely, and 15% replied not likely at all. When asked the likelihood of using public transportation if they saw more people like themselves using the transit system, 11% replied very likely, 21% replied likely, 29% were unsure, 18% replied not likely, and 22% replied not likely at all. When asked the likelihood of using public transportation if it cost less to ride transit, 9% replied very likely, 14% replied likely, 43% were unsure, 16% replied not likely, and 18% replied not likely at all.

Item 2, continued:

When asked to choose the top things that would most likely cause a person to begin using public transportation services in the region, 29% replied transit stops located near home; 25% replied transit stops located closest to work or frequented destinations; 21% replied if employer provided incentives to use public transportation; 21% replied faster/more frequent routes; 13% replied shelter located at bus stops; 13% replied if there were no other options than the bus; 12% replied if buses are scheduled to arrive at stops more frequently; 12% replied if EMBARK provided faster service; 12% replied if they saw more people like them on bus; 11% replied if they understood how the bus systems worked; 11% replied better timed transfers between services; 8% replied if it cost less to ride transit; 8% replied if cost of parking increased at work for places frequented; and 8% replied if service was offered earlier or later on existing routes.

Mr. Tatham said the purpose of the *rider survey* is to better understand characteristic of riders, assess satisfaction transit services, and identify opportunities for improvement. He said surveys were conducted during the fall of 2020 and 1,208 total surveys were completed (994 in Oklahoma City and 214 in Norman). Overall results have a precision of at least +/-2.5% at the 95% level of confidence and Norman's results have a precision of at least +/-6.9% at the 95% level of confidence.

Citizens were asked about satisfaction of service and when asked about courtesy of drivers, 61% replied very satisfied, 29% replied satisfied, 6% were neutral, 2% replied dissatisfied, and 2% replied very dissatisfied. When asked how safe they feel riding the bus service, 54% replied very satisfied, 35% replied satisfied, 6% were neutral, 2% replied dissatisfied, and 2% replied very dissatisfied. When asked about safe operation of buses, 55% replied very satisfied, 33% replied satisfied, 5% were neutral, 5% replied dissatisfied, and 2% replied very dissatisfied. When asked about safety while waiting at a bus stop, 52% replied very satisfied, 36% replied satisfied, 8% were neutral, 3% replied dissatisfied, and 1% replied very dissatisfied. When asked about the cleanliness of the busses, 52% replied very satisfied, 35% replied satisfied, 8% were neutral, 2% replied dissatisfied, and 3% replied very dissatisfied. When asked about safety at transit center, 53% replied very satisfied, 33% replied satisfied, 10% were neutral, 3% replied dissatisfied, and 1% replied very dissatisfied. When asked about ease of locating a bus stop, 51% replied very satisfied, 32% replied satisfied, 7% were neutral, 8% replied dissatisfied, and 2% replied very dissatisfied. When asked about frequency of service, 49% replied very satisfied, 34% replied satisfied, 6% were neutral, 8% replied dissatisfied, and 3% replied very dissatisfied. When asked about COVID safety precautions/procedures while riding, 45% replied very satisfied, 37% replied satisfied, 9% were neutral, 8% replied dissatisfied, and 1% replied very dissatisfied. When asked about availability of accessible bus stops, 47% replied very satisfied, 35% replied satisfied, 9% were neutral, 6% replied dissatisfied, and 4% replied very dissatisfied. When asked about cleanliness of transit center, 47% replied very satisfied, 34% replied satisfied, 14% were neutral, 3% replied dissatisfied, and 3% replied very dissatisfied. When asked about cleanliness of bus shelters, 44% replied very satisfied, 37% replied satisfied, 14% were neutral, 4% replied dissatisfied, and 1% replied very dissatisfied. When asked about information at the bus stops, 46% replied very satisfied, 34% replied satisfied, 11% were neutral, 7% replied dissatisfied, and 2% replied very dissatisfied. When asked about buses arriving on time, 41% replied very satisfied, 37% replied satisfied, 14% were neutral, 6% replied dissatisfied, and 2% replied very dissatisfied.

Item 2, continued:

When asked about ease of getting service information, 44% replied very satisfied, 32% replied satisfied, 13% were neutral, 7% replied dissatisfied, and 3% replied very dissatisfied.

Mr. Tatham said 47% of those surveyed do not transfer buses, 37% make one transfer, 13% make two transfers, and 3% make three or more transfers. He said of the *onboard surveys*, riders were asked the same questions as stated above and the top three priorities were buses arriving on time (45%), availability of accessible bus stops (39%), and frequency of service (36%).

In summary, most residents think transit service is very important even if they are not using it; overall satisfaction with transit service among riders is very high; 92% of Norman residents think transit is important to support economic development and access to jobs; many non-riders would be willing to use transit under the right conditions; and as service improvements are made, expectations are likely to rise.

Councilmembers thanked Mr. Tatham and City Staff for the presentation.

Items submitted for the record

1. PowerPoint presentation entitled, "Survey Findings by ETC Institute," dated August 26, 2021

Item 3, being:

SUBMISSION OF PUBLIC TRANSIT RIDERSHIP REPORT.

Mr. Taylor Johnson, Transit and Parking Program Manager, said the fixed route service transported 18,520 passengers in July 2021, compared to 16,774 in June 2021. The daily average ridership was 712. There were 697 passengers with bicycles and 458 passengers with wheelchairs or other mobility devices transported in July.

The paratransit service transported 1,654 passengers in July 2021, compared to 1,636 in June 2021. Average daily ridership was 57, a decrease of 2.67%. For the month of July, the paratransit service had 0% trip requests denied due to capacity.

Saturday service totaled 1,945 in July 2021, a 50.43% increase over 1,293 in June 2021.

Mr. Johnson said City Staff would like to create an opportunity for anyone interested in public transportation to join Staff for a bus ride during the months of August and September. Each Friday, from August 13 through September 29, a City Staff member will be riding Route 110 on its 10:00 a.m. trip throughout Norman. Boarding will occur at the bus stop at Webster Avenue and Tonhawa Street (just outside the west entrance of the old Central Library at 225 North Webster Avenue). While an RSVP is not required, Staff encourages it because of capacity limitations. He said because of federal regulations, masks, capacity restrictions, and social distancing are still being mandated on buses. He said all public transportation, i.e., buses, planes, trains, etc., have the same mandates throughout the nation.

Item 3, continued:

Mr. Johnson said progress continues to be made on the construction of the new Transit Maintenance and Operation Facility on North Base and commended Fleet Maintenance Division Staff for continuing to ensure the transit fleet is in operational condition despite the age of the vehicles (19 out of 27 buses have met their useful life). This maintenance includes mechanical maintenance as well as fueling, cleaning, and sanitizing the buses each night at the conclusion of service.

The City is in the process of purchasing two battery electric buses and Staff anticipates receiving these vehicles in August/September 2022. Approximately 70% of the vehicle purchase price will be reimbursed through a grant received from the Federal Transit Authority's 2021 Low or No Emission Vehicle Program. Mr. Johnson said the City's project was one of 49 projects selected in the nation. Staff continues to identify other avenues to purchase transit vehicles to modernize and standardize its fleet using existing local and federal funds available.

Items submitted for the record

1. Memorandum dated August 26, 2021, from Taylor Johnson, Public Transit Coordinator, through Shawn O'Leary, P.E., CFM, Director of Public Works, to Council Community Planning and Transportation Committee
2. Public Transportation Monthly Report for July 2021

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Item 4, being:

DISCUSSION REGARDING BACK-IN ANGLE PARKING PILOT PROJECT ON JAMES GARNER AVENUE AND ASSOCIATED ORDINANCE.

Mr. David Riesland, Transportation Engineer, said Norman currently does not have back-in angle parking. Two projects under design, James Garner Avenue, Phase III and Gray Street Two-Way Conversion, offer an opportunity for a back-in angle parking pilot project, which will provide more parking than a typical parallel parking layout. The City created a parallel parking area on James Garner Avenue between Symmes Street and Apache Street in 2019, as part of an original pilot to show how parallel parking with a pull-off lane could work. This parallel parking area was created with the City's Engineering Design Criteria and features a pull-off area to be able to access the parallel parking spaces without interfering with through traffic on James Garner Avenue. He said because pull-off exists, this area is a prime candidate for another pilot project for back-in angle parking by restriping the existing parallel spaces for a total cost of \$1,000 to be accomplished by City workers with completion in September 2021. A pilot project would allow motorists to get used to the concept and allow Staff the perfect implementation of various supplemental signs prior to implementation with much larger projects.

Item 4, continued:

Mr. Riesland said the original pilot project added a row of parallel parking spaces to the west side of James Garner Avenue between Symmes Street and Apache Street with a featured pull-off lane so the backing maneuvers could be made outside of the travel lane. He said the pull-off lane is being illegally used for double and sometimes triple parking. The proposed back-in angle parking will increase the number parking spaces from ten to thirteen (keeping one accessible space) and is designed to eliminate the potential for double parking and is a safer way of parking. He said back-in angle parking is safer because instead of pulling into a parking space, cars back into the space allowing them to make eye contact with oncoming traffic when exiting the parking space. Just like parallel parking, the driver will signal a right turn to warn other drivers, pull past the parking space and stop to reverse into the parking space.

The benefits of back-in angle parking includes improved visibility and increased field of vision when leaving the parking space as motorists are better able to see oncoming traffic; decreased number of collisions - motorists no longer have to back out blindly from their parking space; improved safety for children - car doors will open in a manner that directs children to the back of the vehicle ushering them toward the sidewalk rather than the street; improved safety for bicyclists - as vehicles exit their parking space, they are able to see bicyclists in the roadway; improved loading and unloading – trunks are adjacent to the sidewalk and open car doors offer protection from the street allowing for loading and unloading to occur outside the traveled area; improved accessible parking- accessible parking spaces can be placed adjacent to curb ramps; increased space – reverse angle parking does not require as much space to maneuver as traditional angle parking which may result in an increased number of parking spaces or additional room for sidewalks, bike lanes, etc.; and traffic calming – the back-in maneuver encourages slower vehicle operating speeds.

Potential downsides for back-in angle parking includes vehicles overhanging sidewalks – this can be alleviated with proper design and placement; vehicles backing into street furniture – this can be alleviated with proper design and placement; vehicles may enter the spaces head-in from the opposite side of the street – this can be alleviated with enforcement, signs, and driver awareness; and potential congestion – as with parallel parking, backing in may cause some congestion on heavily trafficked streets. Mr. Riesland said each potential location would be evaluated to determine if it is an appropriate site for back-in angle parking.

Mr. Riesland said Tucson, Arizona, uses back-in angle parking and had reported an average of three to four bike/car crashes per month before back-in angle parking was implemented and zero crashes have been reported since implementing back-in angle parking. Overall, back-in angle parking improves the safety of the bicyclist and drivers by increasing visibility and makes accessing your car easier and safer.

Item 4, continued:

Transition for drivers should not be difficult when aided with signs, education, etc., to clarify the appropriate use of the parking spaces. Mr. Riesland said “seed” cars could also be parked in a few spaces in the beginning to provide a visual example of the correct way to park. He said Staff has created an informational brochure to educate motorists regarding back-in angle parking, which will help with the necessary educational outreach necessary to inform the public of the switch. The parking itself is a simple driving operation that is, in fact, easier than parallel parking and easier than blindly backing into an active traffic lane to leave a space.

Other cities that have back-in angle parking include Tulsa, Oklahoma; Birmingham, Alabama; Charlotte, North Carolina; Chico, California; Everett, Washington; Honolulu, Hawaii; Indianapolis, Indiana; Knoxville, Tennessee; Marquette, Michigan; Santa Barbara, California; Syracuse, New York; Washington D.C.; Hoboken, New Jersey; Auburn, New York; Vancouver, Washington; Davidson, North Carolina; Fort Collins, Colorado; Albuquerque, New Mexico; Bloomfield, New Jersey; Missoula, Montana; New York, New York; Olympia, Washington; Philadelphia, Pennsylvania; Portland, Oregon; Salem, Oregon; Salt Lake City, Utah; San Francisco, California; Seattle, Washington; Tacoma, Washington; Venture, California; Wilmington, Delaware; Burlington, Vermont; Enid, Oklahoma; New Braunfels, Texas; Eugene, Oregon; South Bend, Indiana; Sarasota, Florida; and Arlington, Texas.

Mr. Riesland said signs will need to be displayed to alert motorists on the other side of the street that head-in parking in spaces intended for back-in parking is illegal, but over time, drivers will become more accustomed to the back-in angle parking and avoid the temptation to park illegally head-in.

In order to properly enforce this, a change to the existing Code of Ordinances will be needed. Section 20-805 of the Code of Ordinances deals with “Parking, stopping, or standing not to obstruct traffic.” Mr. Riesland said Section 20-805(7) states “No person shall park, stop, or stand a vehicle facing the opposite way from the normal flow of traffic,” which is proposed to be amended to state, “No person shall park, stop, or stand a vehicle facing the opposite way from the normal flow of traffic including turning across a double solid yellow line to park head-in in a space intended for reverse angle back-in parking in the opposite direction.”

Mr. Riesland said if the Committee is in agreement with the proposed Ordinance change, Staff will work on an agenda item for Council approval. Staff will also make the arrangements necessary to implement the back-in angle parking pilot project on the west side of James Garner Avenue between Symmes Street and Apache Street.

Committee members unanimously supported Staff’s proposal for the pilot project and are looking forward to hearing the results.

Items submitted for the record

1. PowerPoint presentation entitled, “Back-In Angle Parking Pilot Project on James Garner Avenue and Associated Ordinance Change,” dated August 26, 2021

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MISCELLANEOUS COMMENTS.

Ms. Susan Meyer, Norman business owner and resident, said a developer wants to build a commercial strip mall at the northeast corner of Lindsey Street and Berry Road, which is currently zoned R-1, Single Family Residential District. She said the developer wants special treatment to circumvent the traffic controls the City installed along Lindsey Street and she does not believe the developer should be allowed to have ingress and egress from Berry Road as other businesses in the area have restrictive access to their storefronts and are not allowed to enter or exit off Berry Road. She believes the developer's request would cause safety issues for drivers, pedestrians, and emergency vehicles because the intersection already has a high amount of daily traffic including the influx of students at the University of Oklahoma. She said her insurance company refused to renew her 20-year commercial business insurance because their algorithm shows future losses will be too high. She said a new strip mall will only add to the existing strip mall vacancy problem and asked that City Council please consider the traffic and safety impacts to surrounding property owners as well as existing businesses when considering this developer's request. She is also concerned that a traffic impact study will not be required for the development.

Residents along Jenkins Avenue voiced concerns about the Jenkins Avenue Widening Project as the City is allegedly wanting up to six feet of their property and is planning to remove some very old trees. They said the University of Oklahoma is across the street and has more "empty" property to give up than the residential property owners and wondered if the City could ask the University for additional property for the project. Chairman Holman asked Staff to look at options to keep as many trees as possible as well as working with property owners regarding their right-of-way concerns.

Items submitted for the record

1. Proposed draft Accurate Traffic Data Resolution
2. Letter from Susan Meyer

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The meeting adjourned at 6:04 p.m.

ATTEST:

City Clerk

Mayor